

Message Text

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PORS PINS PEPR ECON EFIN MP SE XA FR UK RH
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW, JUNE 9, 1978 - SUMMARY

REF: PORT LOUIS 0625 (DTG 020802Z JUN 78)
PORT LOUIS A-48, JUNE 9, 1978

1. THE RECENT MANIFESTATIONS OF HOSTILITY BETWEEN PARTISANS
OF THE MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PMSD) AND THE MAURITIAN
MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) REACHED A NEW HEIGHT ON JUNE 2 WITH AN
ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THE BODY-GUARDS OF THE TWO PARTY LEADERS, DUVAL
AND BERENGER, IN THE CENTER OF PORT LOUIS IN WHICH REVOLVER SHOTS
WERE FIRED, WOUNDING TWO BYSTANDERS. BOTH PARTY LEADERS CLAIMED
THEIR OPPONENTS WERE TRYING TO ASSASSINATE THEM. AS A RESULT OF
THIS INCIDENT THE POLICE INSTITUTED SPECIAL SECURITY MEASURES IN
CUREPIIE, WHERE A MUNICIPAL BY-ELECTION IS BEING HELD ON JUNE 11,
TO PREVENT THE ELECTORAL COMPETITION FROM DEGENERATING INTO
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VIOLENCE.

2. THE JUDICIAL INQUIRY INTO THE MAURICIEN FIRE CONTINUED THIS
WEEK, BUT THE MAIN NEWS OCCURRED OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM. SHEIK
HOSSEN WAS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED WHEN A MOLOTOV COCKTAIL WAS
HURLED INTO THE HOUSE WHERE HE IS STAYING, AND HE WAS LATER
ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN CONNECTION WITH THE THEFT OF A CHECK-

BOOK. AUTHENTICATED DOCUMENTS RECEIVED FROM BELGIUM OFFERED
CONFIRMATION THAT HE HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF THEFT THERE.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER WALTER FAILED TO GO TO THE SEYCHELLES AS
ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK TO REPRESENT MAURITIUS AT RENE'S FIRST
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. ACCORDING TO HIS PRIVATE REMARKS HE
CAME DOWN WITH A "DIPLOMATIC" ILLNESS AS HE DID NOT WANT TO SHOW
APPROVAL OF RENE'S COMING TO POWER BY FORCE OF ARMS. PRIME
MINISTER RAMGOOLAM TOLD PARLIAMENT THAT MAURITIUS WOULD PARTICIPATE
IN W PAN-AFRICAN SECURITY FORCE IF ONE IS EVENTUALLY FORMED.HHE
ALSO SAID HE HAD OFFERED THE BRITISH TO HOST A CONFERENCE ON
RHODESIA HERE.

4. FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO PRESENTED HIS ANNUAL BUDGET SPEECH
TO THE ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 6. IT RECEIVED GENERALLY GOOD NOTICES IN
GOVERNMENT, PRESS AND BUSINESS CIRCLES, WITH ONLY THE OPPOSITION
MMM EXPRESSING A NEGATIVE REACTION. THERE WAS GENERALHRELIEF THAT
THE ECONOMIC AND FISCAL PICTURE PAINTED BY RINGADOO WAS NOT AS BAD
AS EXPECTED AND THE NEW FISCAL MEASURES HE ANNOUNCED TO INCREASE
GOVERNMENT REVENUES NOT AS PAINFUL AS FEARED. AMONG THE TWENTY
NEW REVENUE MEASURES THERE WAS NO INCREASE IN INCOME TAXES, MUCH
TO THE RELIEF OF THE TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION. THE ORDINARY BUDGET
IS TO INCREASE 9 PERCENT TO ABOUT 254 MILLION DOLLARS, WITH A
PREDICTED DEFICIT OF SOME 15 MILLION DOLLARS. THERE WERE NO MAJOR
POLICY CHANGES ANNOUNCED, THOUGH RINGADOO PNDICATED THAT THE GOVERN-
MENT WILL RESIST WAGE INCREASES THAT ARE INFLATIONARY, THAT
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THREATEN TO PRICE MAURITIAN EXPORTS OUT OF THE WORLD MARKET AND
THAT CREATE UNEMPLOYMENT.
KEELEY

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